

NAFTA has also contributed to the prosperity and stability of our closest neighbors and two of our most important trading partners. NAFTA aided Mexico's rapid recovery from a severe economic recession, even as that country carried forward a democratic transformation of historic proportions.

NAFTA is an integral part of a broader growth strategy that has produced the strongest U.S. economy in a generation. This strategy rests on three mutually supportive pillars: deficit reduction, investing in our people through education and training, and opening foreign markets to allow America to compete in the global economy. The success of that strategy can be seen in the strength of the American economy, which continues to experience strong investment, low unemployment, healthy job creation, and subdued inflation.

Export growth has been central to America's economic expansion. NAFTA, together with the Uruguay Round Agreement, the Information Technology Agreement, the WTO Telecommunications Agreement, 22 sectoral trade agreements with Japan, and over 170 other trade agreements, has contributed to overall U.S. real export growth of 37 percent since 1993. Exports have contributed nearly one-third of our economic growth—and have grown three times faster than overall income.

Workers, business executives, small business owners, and farmers across America have contributed to the resurgence in American competitiveness. The ability and determination of working people across America to rise to the challenges of rapidly changing technologies and global economic competition is a great source of strength for this Nation.

Cooperation between the Administration and the Congress on a bipartisan basis has been critical in our efforts to reduce the deficit, to conclude trade agreements that level the global playing field for America, to secure peace and prosperity along America's borders, and to help prepare all Americans to benefit from expanded economic opportunities. I hope we can continue working together to advance these vital goals in the years to come.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, July 11, 1997.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

THE QUINCY LIBRARY GROUP FOREST RECOVERY AND ECONOMIC STABILITY ACT OF 1997

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. HERGER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, this week marks a monumental breakthrough for resolv-

ing conflict over forest management in our national forests. By passing the Quincy Library Group Forest Recovery and Economic Stability Act of 1997, we sent a message to America that local compromise and community consensus is the new way of doing business on environmental issues. For more than 15 years environmentalists and members of the forest products industry have waged war over managing western forests.

In 1993, Bill Coates, Plumas County supervisor from Quincy, CA, took up the challenge of breaking the gridlock over forest management. He did so by arranging a meeting with environmental attorney Michael Jackson and Sierra Pacific Industries forester Tom Nelson. They met in the library because they knew they wouldn't yell at each other. QLG is now a coalition of 41 local environmentalists, forest products industry representatives, public officials, and concerned citizens who meet each month at the Quincy Library to discuss ways to improve local forest health. This program has been endorsed by local environmental organizations including the Plumas Audubon Society, the Friends of the Plumas Wilderness, the Sierra Nevada Alliance, and the Shasta-Tehama Bioregional Council. At the heart of their discussions is the overriding threat that fire will destroy the forests before any action can be taken. Nationwide, last year more than 5.8 million acres burned with total fire suppression costs close to \$1 billion. The group turned to the best science available, including the recently released Sierra Nevada ecosystem project [SNEP] report which defines, among other things, the elements of a healthy forest. H.R. 858 takes the first vital step toward conflict resolution of environmental issues across the Nation by implementing the QLG proposal as a 5-year pilot project on three of northern California's national forests.

This legislation passed with a recorded vote of 429 to 1. It is fitting that a plan born from consensus would, in the end, pass the House of Representatives with a strong consensus vote. The QLG plan represents an entirely new approach to managing our Federal forests. We now have a local group bringing local solutions to Washington instead of Washington forcing solutions on local communities. I want to thank everyone who played a part in making this happen. This could never have happened without all 41 members of the Quincy Library Group; especially Bill Coates, Tom Nelson, Michael B. Jackson, and Linda Blum. This is truly their legislation. I want to salute them and their efforts. This is the way government should function. I also want to thank DON YOUNG, HELEN CHENOWETH, DAVID DREIER, BOB SMITH, Speaker GINGRICH, TOM DELAY and the entire leadership, JIM SAXTON, WAYNE GILCHREST, TOM CAMPBELL, SHERRY BOEHLERT, VIC FAZIO, PETER DEFazio, GEORGE MILLER, and every one of the 429 Members of Congress who supported this legislation. I would also like to thank the committee staff whose understanding and dedication brought this legislation to fruition.

Particularly I would like to thank Duane Gibson, Bill Simmons, Anne Heissenbuttle, Lloyd Jones, Liz Megginson, Dave Tenny and from my own staff John Magill, Fran Peace, Rich Nolan, Steve Thompson, Dallas Scholes, Dave Meurer, Dave Oleander, Mike Digiordano, Patsy Atkins, Kathy Summers, Donna Burton, Lemoine Sharpe, Ron Shinn, Katy-Duke Chamberlin, Annette Gatten, Lisa

Strohman, and George Morris. This is a great victory. We have finally shown that compromise and bipartisan effort does pay off. Again, thank you for your support and for helping us save the environment in northern California. I hope this bill will move expeditiously through the Senate and eventually be signed into law. I would also encourage that we take the momentum from this bill and use our new-found ability to compromise in a way that makes this Congress a success for America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. FILNER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. FILNER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

THE AGENDA OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I took out this 5-minute special order to hopefully bring some perspective to some of the things that were said here in the House this week.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said over and over again that the agenda for the majority party, at least, in the House over the past several weeks has been threefold; one, to move toward a balanced budget; two, to reduce the tax burden on the American people; and three, to save Medicare.

I would like to talk about the first two of those three issues for just a couple of minutes, as I said, to try to bring some perspective to this week's debate. I recently read an article that was written, an op ed piece, by an individual that I know who is quite famous in the economic world. His name is Milton Friedman. He is a fellow at the Hoover Institute. He wrote about the economy of this country and, because of what has happened, is in the process of happening in Hong Kong, compared our economy with the economy and the historical perspective of Hong Kong.

He noted in his article that the economy of the United States on a per capita basis used to be seven times larger than the economy of Hong Kong. In other words, for every man, woman, and child in this country, we had seven times more economic power than an individual in Hong Kong.

Over the years since as we have moved through history the two countries have actually come much closer together, because today on a per capita basis we are no longer seven times bigger than the Hong Kong economy. As a matter of fact, we are almost the same; a difference of just 7 percent. In other words, our total economy on a per capita basis is just 7 percent larger than Hong Kong's. In other words, we have come from a situation like this to a situation on a per capita basis where we are almost the same.